

The campaign trail is a difficult path to take. Any person with a dream may enter but only a few are able to reach the end. Tara traveled that path with her head held high and a smile on her face the entire way. I have no doubt that her kind demeanor left a lasting impression on the voters of district 14.

Tara is one of those people that leave a huge impact on her community. For many years her efforts to better Chautauqua County have left a lasting impression not only on the county itself but on its residents. Her face, voice, opinions and successes were a staple in the legislature. Our county and our residents are better for the undying work Tara did during her tenure.

A true testimony to Tara can be found in many areas of the county and in many people whose lives she touched. One doesn't have to look far to see what a strong work ethic can do. In the future Tara will continue to better Chautauqua County as she raises her two sons and provides a strong education to her students at Jefferson Middle School.

Chautauqua County is blessed to have such strong individuals with a desire to make this county the wonderful place that we all know it can be. Tara is one of those people and that is why Mr. Speaker I rise to honor her today.

IN RECOGNITION OF ROBERT W.
LAZAR

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 13, 2005

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the retirement of Robert W. Lazar, a man who has made tremendous contributions for small businesses throughout the state of New York, and our nation. Mr. Lazar has graciously served our business community through the New York Business Development Corporation (NYBDC) for the past 35 years.

Mr. Lazar carries with him an extensive and impressive record of helping small businesses across the state of New York. He began his service with the NYBD in 1971, and since that time he has successfully operated in a number of roles within the organization. Since 1987, Mr. Lazar has served as the President and CEO and has been credited with leading his company to unprecedented growth.

With over 1.7 million small businesses in New York, the NYBDC serves a vital role in our state by assisting these businesses in obtaining the financial assistance they so desperately need to start and grow an enterprise. In addition, NYBC also provides much needed credit opportunities to the increasing number of minority and women-owned firms—many of which have difficulty in accessing these types of options elsewhere.

The contributions he has made to our state's small businesses during his tenure at NYBDC have been endless. I have had the pleasure of working with Mr. Lazar in both my capacity as a Member representing Brooklyn, and as the Ranking Democrat on the House Small Business Committee. Some of my fondest memories over the past years include visiting small business owners together, hearing about the aspirations, dreams, and challenges our local businesses are facing, and working to help meet their needs. Small busi-

nesses throughout New York have been fortunate to have such a dedicated, and successful, advocate as Bob working to ensure firms have access to capital and opportunity—and we are lucky that his efforts on behalf of small businesses will continue forward.

Throughout the years, Mr. Lazar has created a long list of accomplishments and has received numerous awards for his services. Mr. Lazar has been a steadfast advocate for small business legislation both in New York and Washington. Because of his efforts, the Small Business Administration's (SBA) 504 lending program, one of the most widely used small business loan programs, is now a more viable source of small business lending for entrepreneurs throughout the nation. In addition, as the President of NYBDC, he has played a key role in helping to expand the use of SBA programs, and in contributing to the development of new loan programs through public-private partnerships. These accomplishments benefited not only New York small businesses—but also entrepreneurs nationwide.

In 2000, he was recognized as the "Small Business Advocate of the Year" in the state of New York by the Empire State Development Corporation. He was named as "Entrepreneur of the Year Award" in 2004 by Capital District Business Review, and has been honored with several leadership awards over the past few years. The truth is that Bob could have been recognized as "Small Business Advocate of the Year" every year.

He has served New York's small businesses with tireless dedication, effort and success. The doors he has opened for women and minority business owners, and the assistance Mr. Lazar has granted to aspiring entrepreneurs across the state have been an invaluable asset—and these achievements have set the path for the future small business owners of New York. I know that Bob's contributions to entrepreneurs will not end with his retirement—and that small businesses in New York and across the nation will continue to benefit from his dedication.

I hope that the U.S. House of Representatives will join me today in recognizing Mr. Robert Lazar on his retirement—and in honoring and thanking him for his work and dedication to small businesses in both New York, and the nation.

TRIBUTE TO MATT CUNNINGHAM

HON. MIKE PENCE

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 13, 2005

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, on December 3, 2005 at the annual Firefighter Holiday Dance & Awards in Anderson, Indiana, firefighter Matt Cunningham was named Anderson's Firefighter of the Year. Mr. Cunningham, thirty years old and a lifelong resident of Anderson, was honored with this award because of his dedicated service to the community and outstanding record within the Anderson Fire Department and Engine Co. 6. The award, a medallion for his dress uniform, was presented by the Evening Exchange Club of Anderson.

Mr. Cunningham exemplifies all that is good with this Nation's local first responders. During this year alone, Mr. Cunningham has assisted with or single-handedly pulled four individuals

from burning structures. His courage, selflessness and devotion are to be commended and serve as an example to us all.

Only in his third-year of firefighting, Mr. Cunningham clearly has found his calling. At the awards ceremony he stated that firefighting "was something I stumbled into and I'm elated I did." He continued, "I love being in Anderson. I love it. The fire department in Anderson stays busy."

Mr. Speaker, it is wonderful to hear such enthusiasm. Matt Cunningham serves his community as a firefighter of the highest caliber, and I am proud today to honor and recognize him for being named Firefighter of the Year in Anderson, Indiana.

HONORING TONY CLARK ON THE
COMPLETION OF HIS INTERNSHIP

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 13, 2005

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the contributions Tony Clark has made while interning in my Washington, D.C., office. Tony has been a wonderful addition to the office and has performed many great services to the constituents of Tennessee's Sixth Congressional District.

Tony now must return to Tennessee for his final semester at Vanderbilt University. In May, he will graduate with a degree in Technology and Public Policy Studies. Tony has made the Dean's List every semester, an accomplishment that comes as no surprise to me after witnessing the dedication that goes into every task he undertakes.

During his internship, Tony has been a tremendous help to me and my staff as he has assisted us in various projects. He has addressed constituent concerns, created booklets to let teachers know about educational resources available from federal agencies and endeared himself to visitors as he guided them through the U.S. Capitol.

I hope Tony has enjoyed his internship as much as my staff and I have appreciated his hard work and eager attitude. I wish him all the best in the future.

AKALI LEADERSHIP BETRAYS
SIKH NATION

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 13, 2005

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, on November 17, leaders of the Akali Dal, the predominant Sikh party, walked out of a seminar in Lahore after Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, Preside: of the Council of Khalistan, predicted that India will break up. The Akali leaders said "We came to unite, not to divide India."

In front of an audience of about 1,500 people, Dr. Aulakh predicted that Kashmir will soon be free and India will break into five or six separate countries, including Khalistan. Former Home Minister L.K. Advani, President of the Bharatiya Janata Party, has said that "if Kashmir goes, India goes." Steve Forbes of Forbes magazine predicted in his magazine